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Bard

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As if still in the body
a range of odors and sensations
perplex vagrant mind.
It's like jazz but too soon.
Irony but it really loves you.
Not having to touch ever
best. *Africa*, a fantasia
for piano and orchestra
from the last decade of his life.
Music is across the room
from any you. Caressive voice
no caress. A floater
on the right side. Eye. Gloves
against the snow. Who called me?
Holding still till it's over
whatever it is. Barbershop.
The dentist. The dark.
How hard the work to make
every day a new inscription
into the almost neutral world.
Rough, as in a foreign alphabet.
Lips, as if speaking.
I will list all their names
and never be near them again.

29 October 2011

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The impending. It takes
life out of now.
Not breathe for twelve hours
and still not be dead.

I smell the places I have been
those miracles of in and out
the inkstained wall, clouds
over Floy Bennett, islands,
so many empty islands in the bay.
She plays as if the music could be held
in her hands a while then let go
tasting every after of itself and her.

29 October 2011

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We can do these things
by candlelight or memory.
It wasn't always that way.
Once we were weather.

Nothing to do about it
except whatever doing was.
Not even waiting—
there is no next day

when you live alone with the world.

29 October 2011

AFTER THE GREAT OCTOBER SNOW

1.

You don't think I'm the one I was do you
because how could that be
(what is be, what is cause)
since I am 'speaking' (in a way)
to you now (though it's *then*
when you 'hear' me far away.

2.

How could a 'letter' to a friend
even blue as an October sky
or pink as a slapped cheek say
or any gesture entailing
tolerable intimacy miscarry query?

3.

So I'm certainly not the one
I was when I began, when you
were the church and I was the priest.
Are any of our candles left
flickering ready to snuff out?
It's hard to get the smell of incense
out of a relationship, memories
while imprecise still stimulate.

4.

Bedouin manners.

We left by night

when it's cool enough

to hurry from what we are

and dark enough so we can't see

our motivations in each move

we flee. Love and be gone

the tragedy of being accurate.

Is there another face

to call my own, another body

that speaks like yours,

spring-sprawl come adipose

tissue of the kind men yearn for

the swerve of amateur anatomy.

5.

In the atelier a sudden draft

the model shivers on her throne

but keeps her pose

or is it a queen

chill in a mediaeval hall

no less challenged

by *the outside air*

intruding through

the imprecisions of architecture

letting in the seeds of the stars?

6.

Shivers but holds still.

I need the bloom of shiver

on your skin, the bird skin

suddenly toothed as my canvas

I will warm you with the smooth

of everlasting colors. How.

The paint will try to remember you

hundreds of years until

a new era of art discards

such trifles as resemblances.

7.

I'm trying to tell you to be with me now

but I have no place for your differences.

Everybody fits through the same door.

Everybody sleeps in the same pronoun.

8.

Inference? Interference?

It was hard to remember

it was Greek to begin with

a girl in a white towel

a gull on the steep pitched roof

memory seems to have no verbs at all.

9.

Can you squeeze into this image?

I guess that's the question

the 'issue' as they say these days—

I thought that meant something that slipped
out of something else, like a magazine
from a publisher, or pus from a wound.

10.

As the temperature rises snow
begins to slip off the branches
but the yew trees, but the hibiscus
are bent to the ground Time
happens to us. Can you squeeze
into my time? Is there any room
at all in me? I am a voice from a stone
and no one knows the mouth of me.

30 October 2011

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A flute that is the same as the breath
or an island so far west the sun
hasn't gotten there yet.

There they use plain water as their ink
and the words so written last forever.

Something comes out of the dimness
towards them, puts something like
arms around them, whispers to them.

Old car crashes left to rust where they fell
and the road bends anew around them.

I have heard their fluteplayers playing,
haven't you? And figures move to the sound
as if they were dancers.

But they are not dancing are they?

30 October 2011

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But then there was after
and a clown bleeding on the pebbles
there was moon
and a blue policeman
there was time and a woman
caught her breath.
And then there was just moon
the population of the earth
had not changed
in one sense or other
everybody sleeps alone.

30 October 2011

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How like something else
almost everything looks.

30.X.11

ON TIME

The time for being time
knows. Salad
means salted. Days
interrupt the dark.
Dark interruptions.

2.
Christmas cards on fire
over empty hearth.
How does knowing know?
They told it so. How
did we believe them?
Beasts made us beasts.
Angels made us forget.

3.
Touch your lip too
not to be sensuous or sly
but to be sure.
A touch is surer than.
Remembering or angels or
touch your lip
to tell your name
make sure it isn't mine.

4.

How could anything be?
Paintings live on stretchers
some names tell some truth
but we are in the trees
she fell in the new snow
made angels. Snow on
whose back? Angels
talk back. The snow.
Our woods. Nobody home.

5.

Hurrying trees.
Signal lights
beside the tracks
semaphore.
I want to know everything
and there is no time—
so learn to know time
and time will be my brother
elder profligate
seldom comes home.

6.

Or this is telling
what was told.
Breakfast again

and why is again?
Why not once only
the great things?
If it were true
once would be enough.
After heavy snow
melted brown
leaves still on their trees.
Motion with emotion.
Everything repeats.
So what is everything?

31 October 2011